

## Your Money Matters! November is National Financial Literacy Month



Students in grades 4 to 12 learn about financial literacy so they can understand how to make informed financial decisions. Financial literacy builds students' understanding of personal finances, the local and global economy and the results of their choices as consumers. It means having the knowledge and skills to make responsible economic and financial decisions with confidence. With this foundation, students will be ready to take responsibility for managing their financial well-being and develop an awareness of the world around them by understanding the impact of their personal choices as consumers.

As a parent, you are a role model for your child. You have an important and continuing role to play in your child's education from the younger years through to high school graduation. This is especially true with financial literacy since your child's decisions become more complex and their choices more expensive as they get older and become more responsible. You can encourage the development of their knowledge and skills by discussing financial matters, providing practice in financial decision-making, and demonstrating active citizenship at home.



### Grades 4 - 6

Some of the key topics covered in these grades are the concept of money, government and its responsibilities to citizens, and the idea of "wants" versus "needs". Here are some tips on how you can support your child's learning:



- Talk about the differences between "wants" and "needs" when watching TV commercials.
- Give your child a weekly or monthly allowance, and decide together what it is intended to cover (e.g. entertainment, snack purchases, etc.) and discuss the benefit of saving a portion of the allowance for bigger purchases. Have on-going conversations with them about how they are managing their allowance.
- Involve your child in decision making when shopping for household items, such as purchasing groceries for their school lunches. Compare the costs of different items.

### Grades 7 to 8

Some of the key topics covered in these grades are budgeting, the impact of consumer choices on the economy, and the importance of keeping personal information safe and secure, especially online. Here are some tips on how you can support your child's learning:

- Point out the financial implications of decisions you make as a family. For example, you can work together to find out the costs of buying and caring for a pet, the costs of going to a movie or taking a day trip. Talk about what this means for other future purchases.



As a parent, there is a lot you can do to help your child learn and love math. Learn about the math that your child is studying in school. Look for math in everyday activities. Offer encouragement and have a positive attitude toward math. Parents can be a great role model, math mentor and coach.

- Discuss how decisions about what to buy affect your family, your community, Canada and the world. For example, choices to buy certain locally made products, such as locally grown food, can have a positive impact on the local economy.
- Discuss how to be a responsible consumer by keeping personal information safe, for example, when setting up an online account.
- Explain how to save for a purchase, even if it is not large, so your child can understand how and why it is important to plan a purchase. For example, you can discuss how to save for a new computer, a gift or a trip, by setting aside a certain portion of their allowance each month.

### Grades 9 to 12

Some of the key topics covered in these grades are calculating pay, taxes, and interest expenses, how to be a socially responsible and ethical investor, and how to budget for life after high school. Here are some tips on how you can support your child's learning:



- Talk to your teen about ways to make informed and responsible consumer decisions. For example, talk with your child about factors that go into deciding whether to purchase a cell phone, such as price, safety, internet access, and chatting with friends. Ask whether a cell phone satisfies a want or a need.
- Your teenager may start to earn a steady paycheck through part-time work or a summer job. Show them how to save and spend responsibly

by helping them to develop a budget. Help your teen identify essential purchases, such as cell phone bills, and set a savings goal with the money left over.

- Talk to your teen about debit and credit cards and how they work. This talk can include interest payments, minimum payment, the time needed to pay off the balance, and perks, such as cash back.
- Plan early for post-secondary education with your teen by talking about the costs involved and supports available, like scholarships and the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP). Create a budget and plan together.
- Help your teen plan for a special celebration, such as their graduation, by developing a budget together. Discuss what costs will need to be considered, and decide together how to save for these expenses.



### Additional websites:

- Canadian Financial Literacy Database has online resources available for parents and students. This database is run by the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada: a federal government agency that gives consumers information about a wide variety of consumer topics.
- Consumer Protection Ontario's website with your child is a great way to show them how to ask the right questions before making important decisions.
- GetSmarterAboutMoney.ca has information, tools, quizzes and games to help parents and students make better financial decisions in different areas of life. The website is run by the Investor Education Fund, a non-profit organization established by the Ontario Securities Commission.
- The Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) website has helpful information on planning for postsecondary education and training.

For more information about Financial Literacy, please visit [Edugain.ca](http://Edugain.ca).

*As a parent, there is a lot you can do to help your child learn and love math. Learn about the math that your child is studying in school. Look for math in everyday activities. Offer encouragement and have a positive attitude toward math. Parents can be a great role model, math mentor and coach.*